The BAG Mag

The Official Newsletter Of The Brandon Apple Group
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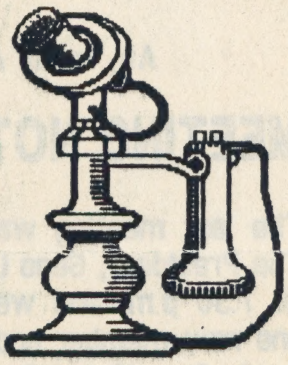
NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1989

Editorial by Roy Fung.

At last!! It looks like memory chip prices are coming down - maybe. Fas-Track has a May special on the GS Ram Plus w/1meg for $389.95. You read it right - "with 1 meg for $389.95". I checked the October 1987 issue (the good old days) of A+ and the third party price of this item varied from $349 to $379. So that price "ain't half bad!!" In fact I had to look on the magazine cover several times to make sure that I hadn't picked up an old issue by mistake. A quick phone call verified that the price was still good and they had them in stock (on 4/18), so now is your chance to get that long needed extra memory, and on a very versatile board too. (It will go to 6 megabytes). Oops! you said you already bought that other memory board that only goes to 4 megabytes, well you're not alone, so did I. But there is a solution - you can add the Ramkeeper or Memory Saver that will allow you to parallel two memory boards. And if you think that you do not need a system with a 10 megabyte capacity. you are probably right, but two years ago we were thinking the same about a system with 1 megabyte.

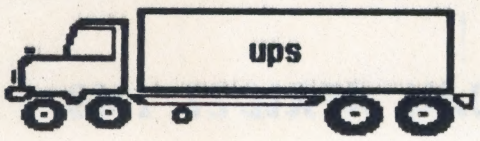
There has been alot of talk recently about Apple dropping the Apple II line. So what! There are so many Apple II's in use that support for them would always be available. It's somewhat similar to the news item last week on the Ford Mustang. The Apple II, like the Mustang, will always have its loyal bunch of users and third party supporters who will continue to provide support. The Apple II will be the Mustang of the computer industry.



And now that the two magazines, A+ and InCider, are merging we should see good things coming out of the consolidation of efforts. Furthermore I always felt cheated whenever I bought both magazines and saw the same advertisements and almost the same reviews in both of them.

I hope everyone saw the advertisement in May's issue of A+ where GolemComputers is offering the Chinook 40 Meg. hard drive with SCSI card for $775. Before Chinook Technology sold their hardware through dealers they had the CT-40 going for $850 which is when I bought. So for those of you who still do not feel adventurous enough to build your own hard drive as described in last month's newsletter, this is your chance to get one at a really good price.

By the way at the last meeting it was mentioned that two of the members who have Chinook drives (both CT-40), had both of their drives crash within a day of each other! One of these belonged to yours truly. We are happy to report that we both got them back within two weeks and both are doing well. The only glitch in the whole process was that Chinook was supposed to return the drive by whatever method you chose to send it to them - except Federal Express Overnight. So I sent mine by UPS Blue but they returned it by UPS ground.

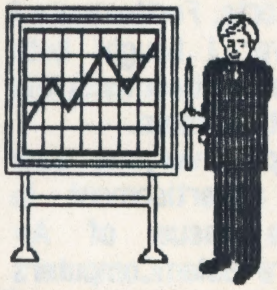


Let me end with a question. Do you know why dogs have been banned at the White House? If you do not know, ask me at the meeting.

Ah, well!! Apple II's forever!!!

MEETING NOTES by Anne Fung

The last meeting was held on March 23, 1989. The President, Gene Linkoski, opened the meeting at 7.30 p.m. and welcomed everyone, including one new member and two visitors from the Polk Apple Core Users Group in Lakeland. Due to the fact that this meeting was being held on Holy Thursday, many of our members were otherwise involved with Church activities and therefore our attendance was down to 15 registered members.



Angleo Leo read the Treasurer's Report and gave a breakdown of our monthly expenditure on the newsletter and mailing costs. He also reminded the group that we still have a few disk boxes for 3.5" disks available at $4.50 each, and for GS owners, keyboard plexiglas covers are a steal at $8.50 (brown opaque)and $10.00 (smoky-grey clear) each. The two members of Polk Apple Core were then quizzed about their group's activities. They have a membership of about 45, which includes interest in both Apple II and the Mac, with approximately 33% attendance at their meetings. They have extended an invitation to members of our group to visit them on the 3rd Thursday of any month at 7.30 p.m. Anyone wishing to do so and get directions to their meeting place should contact our Librarian, Angelo Leo. The meeting continued with a question and answer period both before and after the planned demonstration. Gene Linkoski explained the uses of one of the greatest utility programs, Copy II Plus, to some of our newer members. It was a very interesting lesson from which I'm sure many of us benefitted. There was a general rap session among the others at which many questions were solved. There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.

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DB Master professional - A brief review

Apple II users in search of a heavy-duty, relational database program may well find that DB Master Professional is an ideal solution.

DB Master Professional can use up to 2000 bytes and 200 fields per record: each field can contain up to 250 characters and up to 30 screens per record. One of the nicest features is the use of files as large as 10 megabytes. For those who don't own hard drives, files can be split across as many as 50 diskettes.

DB Master has many different types of fields, including user-defined, automatic date and time, as well as computed fields which can have complex math formulas or date math. In addition to the flexible screen output, there is an excellent report generator that allows printing anything from invoices to five across labels.

DB Master Professional is also easy to use. All commands are accessible from menus. There is a menu on screen at all times that lists the available commands. For the first time user, the manual has a tutorial that teaches the basic features of the program. When using the program, detailed help can be found either through the help screens, which are available at all times, or in one of the two manuals.

(continued on next page)

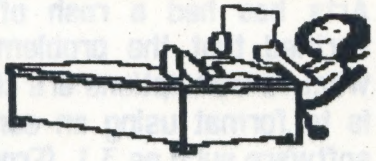
Math Masters

(Multiplication and Division) **a review by Janey Cox**

For every teacher or parent who has been frustrated by pre-set math programs for computers, this is the answer. DLM has just come out with a math drill and practice that goes beyond current expectations in drill and review software. ("Math Masters--multiplication and division) The program has an amazing array of choices for setting up the math program for almost any child who needs to practice math. The first hint of the options available is the manual that comes with the disks. It is over 40 pages long; it is very easy to follow, however, and helpful for first time users. There are two disks with this program, a Program Disk with a "zap your facts" type math game that most kids are delighted to play, and a Teacher Disk with the diagnostic and record keeping functions. (A 3.5" disk contains the both parts, but does not come automatically)

There are two main types of activities. One is a game called Code-O 2000 consisting of small cars traveling across the screen; the player is to press the space bar or use the mouse to line up an arrow to zap the correct answer. The game may be set up for players to type in the answer or find the correct one among some random numbers. Speeds are also variable to minimize frustration for practice, or increase challenge for those adept at their facts. The other type is the familiar problem/answer worksheet, either on paper or on the screen.

The unique feature of this program, however, is not the game but the diagnostic and record keeping functions available to the teacher.



Listing all the many options are impossible to mention here. In setting content, for instance, one may select four content choices among multiplication and division; after the content is selected, a dialog box appears containing five choices for the ability level containing the numerical values for the multiplier and multiplicand (how many of you remember what that is?)

One can also print worksheets or have students work them on screen. There are four kinds of record keeping to find not only what has been learned, but what has been partially learned and needs improvement, based on the number of correct responses.

For teachers who want a well-designed drill and review program for individual use in the classroom, this program shows how far computer assisted instruction has advanced meeting the challenge of working with a variety of students.

"Math Masters" DLM software,
One DLM Park,
Allen, Texas 75002

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DB MASTER

(continued from previous page)

DB Master Professional, v.5 requires an Apple IIc, IIc plus, Enhanced IIe with extended 80 column card, or Apple IIGS. At least two 5 1/4" drives, one 3.5" drive, or a hard drive are needed for use.

More information on DB Master Professional is available from:

Stone Edge Technologies, Inc.,
P.O. Box 200,
Maple Glen, Pa. 19002.
Phone (215) 641-1825.

A demo disk of DB Master Version Five (Not DB Master Professional) can be obtained using the above address. It includes a 110 page tutorial. The cost of the demo is $10.00 plus $2.00 shipping.

A copy of the demo is available in our disk library.

THE LIBRARY.

The following disks have been added to the library.

5.25" disks.

No.-123 Games - Several different games on each side.
No.-124 Investicalc and other business programs
No.-146 Game - Rubics Cube (With instructions)
No.-152 Game - Spider Bot
No.-161 Demo - Proterm (modom) - 816 Paint
No.-162 Demo - Conjecture - Remind Me
Nos.-163-4&5 Newsletter on a disk. From Apple Computer Enjoyment Society.

3.5" Disk library

No.-50 DB Master v.5 - Data base program(demo)

No.-45 Games - Solitaire, Poker, and Momopoly were added
All are very good.

NOTE:- Some of the above programs are Shareware. If you copy and use these, follow the instructions for remitting a fee to the programmer.

FOR SALE:

One meg Ramfactor memory card, for IIE or GS.
Price $350.00 Phone (813) 684-2040
1.5 meg GS Ram Plus memory card for the IIGS.
Price $500.00 Phone (813) 681-5880

Odds and Ends.

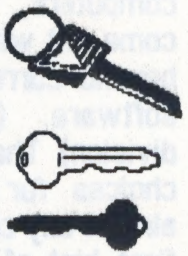
The club still has several 3.5" disk holders and plexiglass keyboard covers for the GS available. Prices are:

Disk holders $4.75
Keyboard covers: Brown (opaque) $7.50
Clear (smoke) $10.00

Contact any of the officers.

IIgs disk anomaly:

A number of problems have been reported regarding copying of disks between 3.5 and 5.25 disks under GS/OS. The problem lies in the 5.25 driver. Basically what happens is this. If the 5.25 drive is locked, the 3.5 drive, whether locked or not, will register as locked. The same holds true in the other direction. If the 3.5 drive is locked, the 5.25 drive will register as locked also. The end result is that if you are copying from one disk to another, and you have locked the source disk to protect it during the copy process, you will be unable to write to the destination disk, because the system will perceive it as locked.



Until this is corrected, there is a workaround: Do not write-protect or "lock" your 3.5 or 5.25 disks when making copies. Users who are uncomfortable with this disk copying process should ask for assistance the first time or two to make sure that they do not accidentally damage their unprotected, unlocked originals.

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Note: BAG has other leaflets containing different bits of information pertaining to the Apple II line of computers. These are in our library and can be checked out by any member. They may be copied but the origonals MUST BE RETURNED.

FOR BARDS TALE LOVERS.

Electronic Arts program "Bards Tale II" will not recognize a disk that was formatted under GS/OS. The game requires the user to format a disk that will store the character information and statistics. When formatted under GS/OS, the disk is not recognized as a ProDOS disk. Electronic Arts has had a rash of these calls, and has verified that the problem exists reguardless of what format options are chosen. The only solution is to format using an earlier version of system software such as 3.1. (From TECH TIDBITS)

GEOS

a review by George VanDusen

Published by Berkeley Softworks
Suggested retail $129.95
1-800-443-0100 ext. 234, orders only

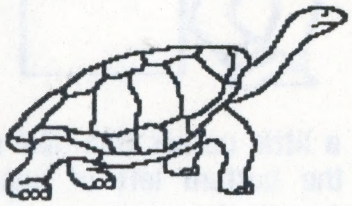
At first glance you might think that GEOS is another integrated Word Processor program, not so. GEOS by Berkeley Softworks, is a whole new operating system similar to and somewhat compatible with ProDOS. The program will reside with other programs on your high capacity disk drives and will work with ProDOS by the link that it sets up between the two operating systems.

ProDOS however, will not be able to understand GEOS, so the compatibility is one way. Moving files with a program such as Copy II Plus will not be possible. This is not a severe limitation because GEOS has its own ability to work with files through the desktop. The best way to use GEOS is on a hard disk drive or ram card, because being a graphically oriented system (GEOS means "Graphic Environment Operating System"), it is a bit slow. One of the things that makes GEOS faster than most similar programs is the way it uses the disk drive for a virtual memory device, allowing such a large program to be used on the Apple Computer. Disk access makes using floppies a bit of a burden because of the need to change disks (the programs reside on both sides of 4 floppies).

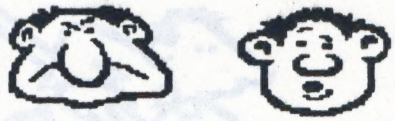
One of the first things I noticed was the speed of the screens, changing and re-drawing. From the desktop you will notice a similarity to other desktops, with the menu bar across the top, the disk drives and Ram card listed on the side, and the wastebasket and printer/driver configuration at the bottom. On most desktops you have to hold the mouse button while you drag the menu down and make your selection. Not so with GEOS, you simply click the selection on the menu bar and move the mouse down to the application you want and press the button again. Once you make your selection or if you move the arrow off of the menu bar the menu will close. Another difference is the absence of the "elevator", where you place your arrow and move up or down on your files list. The way GEOS does it is much faster and more natural. There is a little corner fold (like a bent page corner) on the bottom left of your screen and a page number in the center at the bottom. If you click on the fold you will move the next page and back a page when you click on the part that the fold exposes. Any of the applications ie; Appleworks, Quicken, etc. can be run from the GEOS Desktop. The GEOS applications are under the menu bar title "appls" and can be selected and run from the menu. The applications include "geoWrite", "geoSpell", "geoMerge", and "geoPaint". Other applications can be added such as the spreadsheet program and desktop publishing program. Another item on the menu bar worth mentioning here is the "geos" selection. Here is where you will find the clock, calculator, notepad and puzzle as well as the credits and copyright. One problem with these accessories is that they take so long to load, even from my hard disk drive. If you use GEOS from a RAM disk I'm sure you would notice a significant increase in speed, otherwise it's probably faster to do these things manually (with the old paper and pencil).

The applications I was most anxious to try out were the write, spell and paint. I started out with geoWrite. Again the screen looks a lot like other Graphically oriented word processor programs, with a few notable exceptions. The menu bar works the same as it does on the Desktop. Again, the "elevator" is missing and you have instead a page icon at the top of your screen with a page

number and a blocked out area that shows you where you're at on your page in relationship to the screen. To move up and down on the document you need only move your mouse arrow up or down past the margins of the screen, no having to try to get the arrow inside the little box on the side of the screen. Another thing that makes geoWrite easy to use is the ability to put your cursor any where on the page for editing by pointing and clicking. One thing that is a little unnerving is the speed of the text. For fast typists, you will find yourself getting ahead of the text on the screen. This is especially bad when you're inserting text, because everything behind your cursor has to be moved down. Justification and line spacing can be selected from the top of the screen just under the ruler. The rest of the editing tools are under the "edit", "options", "page", "font", and "style" menu selections.



"GeoSpell", I'm sorry to say, was a disappointment. I feel that a spell checker should work within the document that it is checking. GeoSpell, while working under the GEOS management system, is a separate program from geoWrite. When you are done with your document, you choose geoSpell from the "appls" selection on the menu bar and your document is saved (whenever you leave geoWrite, your current document is automatically saved). GeoSpell is then loaded and you have to go get the document you want checked, presumably the one you were just working on. The checker lets you know where it is in the alphabet by a letter notation at the bottom of the screen, kind of a countdown timer. When there is a word in question, you ask for suggestions and you are put in the general area of the dictionary, where you can scroll up and down to find the word that looks better. After you are finished checking the document you quit the speller and are put back to the desktop where you again choose geoWrite from the menu. Once in geoWrite you must then choose your document to be loaded so that you can change, edit or print it out. All of this sounds familiar to another program that was a forerunner to the more current spell checkers used with a word processor program that we are all familiar with but shall remain nameless at this point in this review. As an example, I took a one page document and went through the procedure outlined above with geoWrite and geoSpell. Using the program on a hard disk drive, starting with the document on the screen and ending with the spell checked document back on the screen, took 10 minutes and 6 seconds. The same document checked with a currently popular spell-checker (by a couple of funny looking brothers) used "within" a currently popular word processor (that's also a spreadsheet and database), took 1 minute and 56 seconds. This is quite a time difference, not to mention the keystrokes involved. With a speedup device the speed of the spell checker is significantly increased.



"Text Grabber" in the "appls" menu will convert wordprocessor programs such as AppleWorks, Word Perfect, Multiscribe and "Generic", into GEOS compatible files that can be loaded onto the geoWrite desktop, and edited and manipulated with the GEOS tools. You can change the fonts and styles, and add graphics, to make your document just the way you want it. The process of converting is amazingly simple but a little slow because GEOS has to convert ProDOS and DOS 3.3 files into the GEOS language. "Graphic Grabber" converts graphics from programs such as Newsroom, Printmaster, Print Shop, Dazzle Draw, PM Art Gallery, and PM Drawing Pad into graphics that can be read by GEOS. You set up a "folder" in which to store your graphics that have been converted and named. When you are in the geoWrite word processor, you can then use the edit menu selection to paste the graphics of your choice into your document.

"GeoPaint" lets you draw and print graphics of your own creation or use graphics that you have imported with the Graphic Grabber. You have all of the traditional drawing tools and text possibilities, such as the paint brush, air brush,

eraser, lines, squares, circles, and text, to name a few. One of the things that is not available though is color, which to some would not be a serious drawback. My preference is not to have color graphics in my documentation anyway. A nice thing is the "page map" that lets you move around on the page by pointing and clicking where you want to be in relationship to the page. Like geoWrite, the box on the page represents the portion of the page shown on the screen. Editing graphics is made easier by the Pixel Edit mode whereby you can magnify the picture and edit it one pixel at a time to enhance or clean it up.

A few problems that I encountered with GEOS include things that may be exclusive to my equipment. I have an RGB monitor using a RamWorks II card by Applied Engineering with the RGB extender attached to the card. This configuration is not bad until you add a Transwarp card. It seems that the Transwarp logo that shows on the screen on boot up changes the RGB extender, so that it is not compatible with double hi-res. If graphics programs such as GEOS do not reset the card, it becomes impossible to read the screen. To the rescue, the Zip Chip from Zip Technologies, sorry, but it seems that I could not get GEOS to work with the Zip Chip, that is while my universal disk controller card was left in the computer. It takes some experimentation sometimes to figure out what configuration certain software works best with. Another limitation is the disk drive capacity of GEOS, four drives max. If you have a hard drive as well as a couple of floppies and a 3.5" drive or two, you might have to make some adjustments. Apple IIgs owners who have several drives attached need to be aware that only the first four will be recognized. The ideal configuration would seem to be a ramcard, a Zip Chip, a hard disk drive, and an old Apple II disk controller with two floppies attached. This configuration allows you to make your backups on the floppies and install the program on your hard disk drive. You can set GEOS up to boot directly off of the hard drive or you can set up a program selector on the floppy drive from where you can select GEOS on the hard disk drive.

One of the best things about GEOS besides the program, is the documentation. These folks could teach the entire industry about documentation for computer software. It comes broken down into several manuals that are easy to read, incredibly simple to locate answers to questions or to reference a function of the program. The manuals are in a sort of outline form with main headers and sub headers in bold so that you can almost leaf through and locate what you're looking for. While GEOS is a very simple program to use and the temptation is there to use it without reading the documentation, it's pleasing to know that with little trouble you can have an answer to your problem. Another thing of major importance to most of the Apple world, myself included is the issue of copy protection. GEOS is not protected, making it easier to back up and install on large capacity devices such as hard drives and 3.5" drives. As I mentioned, the program comes on four double sided 5 1/4" floppy disks, and Berkeley Softworks suggests making and using backups for your own use.

With the promise of more integration, I would strongly consider GEOS for my software collection. It offers a lot of program for the money and could well be the only program most would need for just about every application. It's hard to believe that so much could be done within a single environment on the lowly (tongue in cheek) Apple IIe or IIc. I really like this program, the more you use it the more you appreciate its simplicity. If you're a power user it may not be for you, but for people who want a lot of program for the right price, you couldn't do better.

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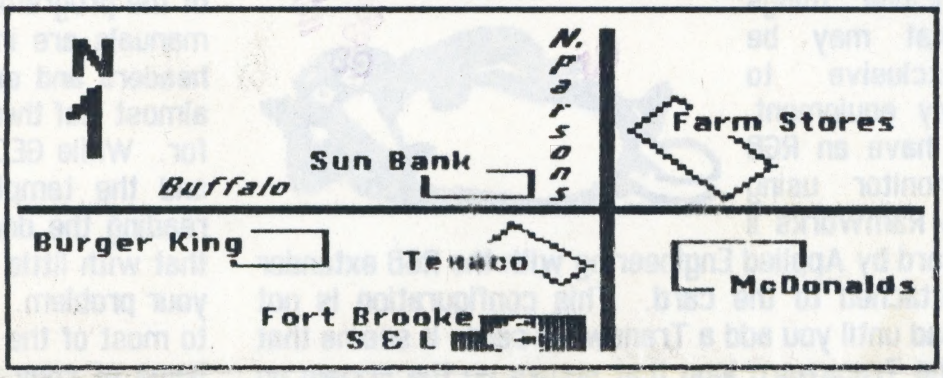
BRANDON APPLE GROUP

BAG MONTHLY MEETING

FOURTH THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH
7.30 PM- 10.00 PM (UNLESS NOTIFIED OF CHANGE)

PRESIDENT:	GENE LINKOSKI	681-9654
1ST VICE PRESIDENT:	SVEN JOHANNSEN	681-3486
2ND VICE PRESIDENT:	ROBERT McDONALD	681-5880
SECRETARY:	DONALD H. MARSIAN	689-9387
TREASURER:	ANGELO LEO	684-2040
LIBRARIAN:	ANGELO LEO	684-2040
LIBRARIAN:	ROBERT McDONALD	681-5880
BAG EDITORS:	ROY & ANNE FUNG	681-9980

WHERE: FORT BROOKE SAVINGS & LOAN BANK'S COMMUNITY ROOM, SW CORNER OF NORTH PARSONS AVENUE AND BUFFALO AVENUE (SR 574)



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NEXT MEETING THURSDAY APRIL 27, 1989